

Dear Shrinks,

3/27/73

Fortunately or unfortunately, however one views it, I can lose myself in outside work and, unless I make a determined effort to think of other things, my mind gets a rest while my body builds up exhaustion. I had planned to think your 3/24 on Hoch through while doing the outside work I also planned. However, in the morning stint I concentrated on the brambles as I piled them up to provide animal housing until they rot and during the afternoon, mowing in a woods (!) with a walking mower and mowing patches of honeysuckle and small woody debris along the edge of what will be our garden. I never gave a thought to thinking. I paid attention to what I was doing, except when I kept my mouth open and the mower filled it. So, I respond cold but with considerable respect for a first-rate analysis based upon years of observation. Two out of two ain't bad! Especially two unusual ones.

Paul has an excellent intelligence. That he has troubles me when I think of his record. I ~~made~~ allowances for temperament, character and other elements and remained troubled intermittently over the years. I first met him in the Archives in the late spring of 1966. Actually, you have seen him almost as often as I have. We have corresponded heavily over the years. He has been very kind in many small ways, as I have tried to be with him.

Give this sharp intelligence, how do I explain the first Alvarez ploy to myself when he defends Alvarez? (My suspicion was and remains that Paul and others discussed my earlier Zapruder work with A and got him started. I do not lose faith in this belief about origin on learning that Alvarez was part of Codename Jason.) Of a continuing trusting relationship with Lifton when he knows Lifton is insane (literally), sinister and of exceptional intelligence? Or the melonry? Even if I attribute origin to Olson, who I never trusted, Paul's intelligence had to tell him better. His training told him that the entire "experiment", beginning with concept, had no scientific validity. Yet he went in for it and adhered to it. My severity then almost caused him to break off.

Now he is taking up with those he characterized as nuts himself and doing what he earlier described as nutty things when others did them.

For a while, a rather long while, he was silent. I heard a bit from a few others, but not much. His plans he has not communicated to me. I understand he is not going to work for a living for a year but will devote himself to a book he has no expectation of getting printed, a book he knows will duplicate one I've started and he's read what I've written. That doesn't have to be ego-tripping, but when I consider the marking of #10, the search for big-name reporters, the dribbling out of part of the book for no purpose and the kind of crap he is talking about using to mark the event, I am again troubled. This, instead of the other way around (I think), I suggested that if he doubted my word, he consult you. He has not consulted you and has not responded to me. Maybe he is angry. That may be the best thing. You may remember I was pretty firm on breaking off myself. That he has not consulted you, however, tells me that angry or not he knows I'm right, won't face the possibility of your telling him he is wrong, or is what I have long known he is, a very bullheaded young man.

There is one mannerism you did not comment on. He makes a short, quick bow in talking. It is not necessarily Germanic, but whenever I've seen it it has made me ask myself if it is and if it is an indication of an upbringing. (His parents live not far from here, an hour or less, pass within less than 10 minutes regularly, and never stop. They were here with him once. He stopped off for a few minutes last time he was east. They go to Washington from their West Virginia home. We invited them to stop off and have not heard from them since. Perhaps this is normal, but most parents, knowing their son is in regular contact with someone, might have a bit of curiosity.) One or both parents speaks with an accent. Both are doctors. The mother is a pathologist.

There is the chance he might consult you before the event, thus I take this time.

I am surprised that he didn't acknowledge you at Richmond, however.

I have never seen him other than appearing shy and speaking very softly. If I ever saw him excited, I don't remember it. I never recall any writing characterized by any emotion. At most an offhand crack or some rather good wry humor. Hal used to be close to him, but there was never any reflection of warmth.

(I did not suggest to Lesar that he look you up, did not tell him how to--didn't mention anything. I think what I had in mind was the possibility you might want to meet him, not the other way around.)

Just about the first thing Lesar asked me when I saw him on his return was did I have any reason to believe Paul is paranoid. Because I was first surprised and then discounted the incident, I made no effort to retain a clear recollection of what Jim said. They were someplace for lunch, Paul had his brief case with him, and he was a bit ostentatious about being able to keep an eye on it. Maybe he has information of that character, or things someone is following him, but when he never conducted an interview until I leaned on him to and then told him how to go about it -- he actually thought one had to have cunning of a store of tricks, or was utterly lacking in confidence, I can't imagine what he has that the government doesn't. So why should anyone worry about his case? I don't know what was in Jim's mind, but Jim said he asked Paul about it and Paul said something to the effect that he wants to be safe, secure and certain. About his correspondence with the government? What he got from it and can get again? What in the world could he be worried about? And if he were worried, is not the simplest thing to keep it at his feet? It does not attract attention to do what I have done, keep it next to a leg at a table. Now in mine I always had a expensive subminiature camera (unless it was in my pocket, an expensive tape recorder, tapes of interviews and notes of them, etc., a few things of value and ~~xx~~ rarely not a few secrets. I was investigating. He never has. So, when I got the letter I sent you, I recalled Jim's impression of paranoia.

So much of my stuff has been stolen simply because I put people in a position to steal that is my least concern with him, I have taken much time with the younger ones for many reasons. I will not last as long as they, I want to educate and inform them (by "educate" I really mean teach them how to think and do as colleges do not and to give them confidence so they will try), and I want to encourage them. With Howard, who began, before meeting me, regarding me as a nitpicker, it has worked well. He was going to lift some stuff once, confessed it later, and took it out of his book. I declined to read the ms. fearing this. He learned and corrected on his own. He also lacked confidence when he was going to get to see Specter. He came down here and we taped the nature and direction of his interview as we discussed it, he went home, listened to the tape, and ~~then~~ then, at 17, did a helluva job. Since then although he is as quiet as Paul, he has been willing to tackle anything, including Specter in public. (There was quite a reaction from Specter's goons when Howard blew the bastard at Penn.) Stealing is not my real concern, much as I'd like it not to happen. As you know but he doesn't, I'd thought through his situation with his book in which he has no confidence and have an alternative ready for him. I sent you the precis. I have a copy for him ready. And I suggest that today's Post editorial says all over again that I am right and that he could have a successful book. Which I also could do, in a sense better because I've sued the finks, lived with them, fought with them.

Aside from compassionate concern, I'm worried about all the others blowing their own possibilities for the future. I'll have no trouble breaking off. That also is not my ~~xxxxx~~. I'm 60, tired and abusing my body, and there are only a couple with really good minds, youth. I don't expect to do everything myself, to be able to, don't want to and know that except with an unusual break it is not possible. So, I've wanted to leave a second generation. Right now it looks like only one. Aside from Paul, with whom I'm now disillusioned, except for Howard, the few rational ones were doing and were able to do very little work. The rest are all nuts. (Yrill's public ^{statements} ~~statements~~ by the way, have depressed a number into a lingering silence I've not broken.)

If my letter does not say what you suggest, I was too hasty. I told Paul I would not have any association with the kinds of things he had in mind.

Also deeply troubling is his going after what he knows I've been working on for years and what he knows I'd give him when I got it, the suppressed transcript on Oswald as an agent. That is ego-tripping and it is close to dishonesty. He has copies of all my Archives correspondence, both ways. I can't imagine what else could be in his mind, given all the things there are to seek.

The "morality" of modern scholarship is, I suppose, a kind of justification. Being subject in formative years to the Alvarez' is, I guess, another.

About time to go for Lil.

There sure are a lot of coincidences, all at close to the same time!

Appreciate the continuing time on the waif. I don't feel like a wafer. Her reaction was a strong self-justification, all her troubles, her need to look out for herself, etc. My firm response, or I hope it is firm, is enclosed. It may cut her off again, as it has in the past.

Hadn't thought of what you say about the ~~athletes~~ athletes. There has been more of that, like the wife-swapping. I was aware of the long hair from TV comment.

There is a deep discontent. The conservatives and the nuts who consider and call themselves but are nuts all show it. This includes those more affluent than the athletes. It is gradually dawning on all kinds of people that we have enshrined evil, that evil has no plan, no principles, always fails and that things are going to hell very fast.

D may not have the physical, attractiveness generally associated with that kind of operation, but there is never any shortage of the eye-taking. She can take the mind, and that can, as you suggest, make a difference. Interesting. I hadn't thought of it.

I'll fill the envelope, to what the stamp will carry, with stuff from the next 3cl.

Thanks and best,